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 **ST. JOSEPH’S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE- 27**

**IV SEMESTER BA GENERAL ENGLISH**

**END SEMESTER EXAMINATION - JULY 2022**

**GE 418 (SSA SPECIAL) - HEP, EPS, IES and for all the students of EJP, CPE, JIP and TEP**

**TIME: 2 ½ hours Max marks: 70**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

**1. This question paper has FIVE printed sides.**

**2. You will lose marks for exceeding word limits.**

**3. Please write SSA SPECIAL on the front page of your answer booklet.**

**3. You are allowed to use a dictionary during the examination.**

**PART A**

1. The following extract is from the introductory chapter titled, “Imaginations of Bangalore”, by Narendra Pani in the book *Bengaluru, Bangalore, Bengaluru: Imaginations and their Time*

**Of Facts and Imaginations**

In the first decade of the twenty-first century Bengaluru shows few signs of a collective effort to recognise, let alone celebrate, its past. There are old traditions that do survive, the most notable being the annual Karaga festival. But there is very little effort to remember historical events that have not been kept alive by traditional rituals and the mythology that is built into this form. There may be the occasional monument, like Tipu’s summer palace, that still stands. But there is little to remember the turning points in Bengaluru’s history. In two battles, for the *peté* and the fort in March 1791, several thousand Mysoreans died fighting the British armies. These were also battles in which the first metal encased rockets in the world were used. Yet there are no memorials or other acknowledgements of the lives lost in fighting a colonial power. The roles of Shahji and Shivaji too find few reminders in the buildings or other monuments of the city. Indeed, popular historical accounts of the city rarely get beyond strong doses of nostalgia.

This collective historical amnesia is not just a little quirk of an interesting city. There are bound to be deeply entrenched reasons for this amnesia to have lasted, as it has, for centuries. If we see history, following E.H. Carr, as a ‘continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past,’ this dialogue has never really gathered momentum in Bengaluru. This failure cannot be placed at the door of historians. While their efforts may not be entirely without blemish, they have not had the encouragement and support that would have been forthcoming in a city that was seeking its identity in its past. And this lack of support for history can be traced to a single fact: all through Bengaluru’s often tumultuous history, the emerging dominant groups have had little reason to celebrate the past. The only interest the British had in the regime of the Tipu that they defeated was to defame it and ensure its popular support was quickly overcome. And while later dominant groups may have had a less antagonistic relationship to their predecessors, they too had little reason to delve too deeply into the past. Indeed, they did not even, strictly speaking, share the same space as their predecessors. Each new regime tended to be located in the then periphery of the city. From the Cantonment in the early nineteenth century to the public sector in the middle of the twentieth century to the information technology industry in the beginning of the twenty-first century, the emerging growth centres have always been located outside the boundaries of what was then the city. As the emerging economic powers put their own stamp on the city, they had no reason to celebrate earlier traditions that they were trying to replace. On the contrary, it helped to ignore the previous avatar of Bengaluru. And the best way to do so was to play down, if not completely ignore, the history of the city.

This absence of an adequate ongoing dialogue between the past and the present has an overwhelming impact on the way the inhabitants of Bengaluru, and hence others, imagine the city. These imaginations do not do justice even to the preoccupation with the present. The imaginations of the present too vary depending on which section of the present we are concerned with. Nowhere is this difference in imaginations more evident than in the name of the city itself. In the local Kannada language, and imagination, the city’s name has always been Bengaluru. The coming of the British in 1799 saw their version of the name of the city, Bangalore, gaining prominence. Not only was it the official name in English, but other Indian languages too began to use variations of this word. While a Cawnpore may have quickly reverted to being Kanpur, the acceptance of the Anglicised imagination in the city was so deep-rooted that Bangalore remained the name that was recognised among those speaking English. It was only in the early twenty-first century that it was decided to unify the name of the city across languages by changing the official name of the city, in English, to Bengaluru. After two centuries there was finally a single pronunciation of Bengaluru’s name.

The overwhelming presence of the imaginations of the dominant groups at each point in history has ensured the dialogue with the past is entirely one-sided. Bengaluru has developed a tendency to interpret the past not only in terms of the present, but also almost solely from the point of view of the dominant groups of the present. The few remnants of historical monuments that remain are all interpreted in ways that reflect current concerns. And this habit too is quite deeply entrenched. By the end of the nineteenth century, Benjamin Lewis Rice was insisting that Kempe Gowda’s four towers were no more than markers of the boundaries of the city. This is now conventional wisdom, though there is little reason for a founder of a city to place limits on its growth.

The disregard for the past, ironically enough, also distorts the perceptions of the present. The imaginations that develop of the city invariably have little time for trends that may once have characterised the urban space, and are instead preoccupied with the dominant tendency at each point of time. The earlier trends may not have disappeared, but they no longer count for the imaginations of the city, or even for policy makers. Bengaluru was a major trading and business centre before 1800. But with the coming and the growth of the Cantonment it was the ethos of the latter that was taken to represent the city as a whole, giving it sobriquets like ‘pensioners’ paradise’. The fact that the old city remained an important trading centre, and is so even today, was largely ignored. In keeping with this pattern, the rise of the public sector in the 1950s saw the Cantonment disappear from any image of Bengaluru, though it was to be several decades before the areas of the Cantonment were truly integrated into the overall city. Again, the rise of Information Technology has seen the tendency to ignore the city’s public sector and defence moorings, though the Indian Air Force runs the country’s most prominent air show in Bengaluru.

Pretending history does not matter also leads to imaginations of the city ignoring both what the past has made possible as well as the barriers it may have created. There is inadequate recognition of the fact that, as Tilly puts it, ‘events occurring at one stage in a sequence constrain the range of events that is possible at later stages.’ There can be few better examples of this risk than Bengaluru’s experience with education in the years after the information technology boom took off. It does not take much insight to recognise that the city’s English-educated technical manpower proved to be one of its strongest magnets in attracting investment in information technology. This manpower, in turn, owed a great deal to a highly subsidised system of higher education. And yet one of the most striking policies during the years when the information technology boom took off was a manifold increase in the cost of technical education.

The inadequate appreciation of the history of a city makes actors in it insensitive to even loud signals from the past. To cite Tilly again, ‘Once a process ... has occurred and acquired a name, both the name and one or more representations of the process become available as signals, models, threats, and/or aspirations for later actors.’ The sensitivity to these processes in Bengaluru is often so poor, that even the signals that emerge from recent history are not always recognised. The film actor, Rajkumar, became the symbol of the agitation for the primacy of the local Kannada language in the 1980s. He generated very strong public reactions to this and other issues he identified with. There should have been little doubt that his passing away would lead to the expression of strong, even violent, reactions. Yet when he died in 2006, the state was not entirely prepared for the mass reaction that finally led to several deaths in the rioting and police action that followed.

**I.A. Answer any TWO of the following questions in 350 words each (2X20=40)**

1. Narendra Pani hints at collective amnesia being the absence of ‘negotiation between the past and the present’. Is there a location that carries connection with the past and the present that you are familiar with? How often do the past and the present interact in this context?
2. The author notes, “Bengaluru has developed a tendency to interpret the past not only in terms of the present, but also almost solely from the point of view of the dominant groups of the present.” Are places like MG Road and Brigade Road designed for the younger generation excluding the old? How would you juxtapose the Brigade road War memorial in the light of the above argument?
3. In the above passage the author argues for a deeper negotiation with the history of the city accounting for the past while being conscious of the present socio-economic conditions. If you were to tell a friend back home/other place about your experience of exploring Bangalore, what mode would you use to do so?

**II. A. Answer any TWO of the following questions in 200 words each (2X15=30)**

1. ‘A variety of quotes and poems on themes ranging from life, love and family are often written over auto rickshaws, lorries, cars or two-wheelers in India. However, these spottings last for a fleeting moment before they disappear into the traffic and eventually fade from our memories. Visual poetry remains largely undocumented and even if someone clicks a photograph, it rarely is available for public access.’ What have you noticed about the rear-ends of auto-rickshaws in Bangalore or other cities?
2. ‘The subaltern Akkithimmanahalli is dwarfed by the upscale Langford Town and Richmond Town on its flanks. The village, overrun by a city, still retains its pocket-sized shops and mud-brick homes whose small, hinged doorways open into the street…Maps drawn by the British in the 1800s called it ‘Accatimpally’ and indicate that it was located just outside the boundary of the Cantonment…Old maps indicate the existence of rice fields fed by the tank…The tank was breached in the early 1980s as part of a malaria eradication drive. In its place came the Karnataka State Hockey Stadium and a commercial complex. Part of it is also a playground that is mainly used by children from the localities nearby.’ Discuss the above statement with reference to the changing urban landscape in contemporary times. Do you know of similar diminishing nature pockets in Bangalore or any other city?
3. The following cartoon illustrations by Paul Fernandes carries a nostalgia for old time Bangalore. Share an impressionable moment from your memory, associated with any city, that triggers a sense of nostalgia.





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